THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——*VARIOUS OBJ[illegible] FROM THE SENSE,*
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

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Parvum pit Acheronta Herculeus labor. HOR.

Long dropping wears away stones. POOR RICHARD.

IT has always appeared to me difficult to determine, to what principle in human nature we could fairly attribute that contrariety of opinion, on almost all subjects, which so generally prevails. If this discordance were found in the discussion of speculative subjects only, perhaps the cause could be more easily discovered; but when it descends to practice, when it dares even to oppose experience and general utility, I acknowledge my ignorance, and give up the enquiry.

Our real advantage is essentially connected with our habits of industry; and without this, no man can be denominated independent.

The good woman, so elegantly described in my last, was not afraid of the WINTER, for her family were well clad, and that by the labour of her hands. The storm howled, she heeded it not; the frost and the snow came, but she felt no dread, her resources were within herself, she knew that her household were well provided; want, poverty, cold and distress came not near her habitation; for she wrought *willingly* with her hands. Storms in the natural world, may be justly compared to wars in the political or moral world: Were nations actuated by the eternal principles of justice, if no inordinate sentiment, involving particular advantage to the detriment of the whole, existed; if man were as he ought to be, a lover of justice, a doer of mercy, and an humble walker, then indeed nations and individuals might live as united in one extensive family, each only consulting and promoting the general good; but this is not, nay, agreeably to the present state of things, cannot be the case. It is true, the philosopher may say "no man is

born for himself," but practice and experience preach a doctrine widely different, they proclaim, with POPE,

Self love, the spring of action, rules the soul.

Every nation has its own peculiar interest deeply at heart; to promote it, are their deliberations—to increase it, is their whole study. If this reasoning be true, it behoves us seriously to consider whether we ought so to regulate our affairs and conduct our internal concerns as to stand like the good woman, at all times in no dread of the winter.

When a nation can provide for all its wants; when its internal resources are equal to its consumption, when, were it shut out from any communication with the whole world, its own industry, ingenuity, and soil could afford the means of happiness, then it is truly independent. Such is our country, such our art, and such American ingenuity. Listen not then, my fellow citizens, to those enemies of our freedom, who request you not to attempt manufacturing for yourselves. Visit in this city our *domestic warehouse*, one visit will prove that their assertions are the assertions of men envious of AMERICAN ENTERPRISE AND WORTH. You will there see the effects resulting from a SMALL SOCIETY patronizing the exertions of men of genius; you will there see, that we can sell goods *home-made*, and of a better texture than those that can, for the same price, be imported from Europe: Therefore, Americans, join your hands to the spindle, lay hold of the distaff; export not your cotton, manufacture it; lay out sheep wakes, improve the breed; encourage artists, reward ingenuity; cultivate sugar plantations in such parts of our united country as are favourable, encrease your number of sugar-maple trees; give premiums to those who can bring to market the greatest quantity of the finest cloth and of the best texture: Improve your roads, cut canals; discover mines, be assured, in them our country is fertile. By these, and such like exertions, our citizens will be encouraged to industry; idleness, the hand-maid of vice, will be banished; Liberty will smile on us with benignant aspect; Independence shall here fix her residence; our citizens will be hardy, robust and free; for they will be the children of *Labour*: And should the mercenary slaves of Europe invade our territory, they will sink down discomfited, crushed by the nervous arm of the industrious and independent American. Surely, under such circumstances, and with such resources, like the good woman, we need not fear the winter: But still, let it be re-

membered, that not one of *our* family has ever been an advocate for war, we have one and all considered it as the worst of evils; yet no OPTIC has ever suffered tamely a proud domineerer to rob him of his rights: Our glory is to be independent, to supply our own wants, and work *willingly* with our hands.

OBADIAH OPTIC.

ORIGINAL.

THE TORTOISE.—No. IV.

> Lovely indeed the mimic works of Art,
> But Nature's works far lovelier. COWPER.

I HAD just drawn off my boots and seated myself in an easy position to enjoy the comforts of domestic life, when my servant entered, announcing a visitor, whom I desired him to introduce: It was my neighbour TRUEMAN; after the usual courtesies and he being seated in our family circle, participating the pleasure arising from a brisk fire on a cold evening, he asked me, with a peculiar earnestness of expression, what object I intended to accomplish, by inserting in my last number, the pathetic account of a family, unknown beyond the narrow sphere of its locality?—surely, said he, you cannot suppose our citizens will feel sufficient interest in the good qualities of your deceased friend to induce them to cull the sweet flowers which bloom on his grave; believe me, mankind at the present day, rather aim to emulate the popular excellences of the living, than to possess the virtues for which those who are now dead have been justly esteemed; besides, your description savours somewhat of fiction, and should this opinion once take possession of the reader's mind, there is an end to every good effect you might have wished it to produce; it will then be viewed as a subject to be read merely for amusement, not as an incentive to a virtuous life.

The force of his last observation, I could not but feel, though I had no inclination to concede a victory and abandon the work I had thrown up in opposition to vice, without some attempt to prove its utility; yet I knew not rightly how to reply—Do you then, said I, believe that no work of fancy or imagination is calculated to promote the cause of virtue?—This question, said he, is too indefinite; doubtless there are some of this nature, which have been highly beneficial to society, therefore I would not have the temerity to class them indiscriminately with those exuberances of error

L. of C.

which inundate the taste and cloy the appetite, so as to leave but little relish for wholesome truth; but, continued he, though a plain relation of supposed facts may be read with pleasure, yet it requires the stamp of probability to render it impressive: There is by nature in man, however dull he may be, a propensity to acquire information of some kind, and when disappointed, disgust succeeds; novelty is ever captivating, but still it must bear the semblance of truth, to produce any permanent effect: Your picture of EDWARD, is a partial delineation; you have, by withholding from the view of those whom I have no doubt you wished to benefit, the faults of your friend, presented a perfect character, and by this impropriety have, in some measure, destroyed the usefulness of the example; we find his parallel in almost all the tales and romances now current, which are read to beguile the tedious hours Fashion has consecrated to Folly, and generally have no other effect than to promote an encreasing desire for these streams of indolence, which, like some species of poison, produce such an insatiable thirst, that the means to allay it operates as the extinguisher of life.

According to your reasoning, then, said I, you would condemn as folly the reading of novels?—Not unexceptionably; said he, the mind must be indulged with food suited to its nature, otherwise it will relapse into sour misanthropy; the feelings should be kept alive, but truth ought ever to be the governing principle; therefore, in every narrative, we must expect to find, in the characters exhibited, some blemishes, otherwise we are to suppose them inimitable: Novels ought to be copies from nature, addressed to the understanding, and to have for their object the improvement of the mind; they should tend to lead it into a correct manner of thinking, to rectify the eccentricities of the judgment, and dispel the clouds of ignorance and superstition; Truth should still rise superiour to Fancy, and shine with her native lustre, though in the hemisphere of Imagination.

I could not but be pleased with the sentiments of my candid visitor, and readily coincided with him in opinion.—At the conclusion of his sentence, he looked at his watch—it was 9 o'clock—he rose to depart, when, not willing to lose so hastily such agreeable company, I recalled his attention to "*The Eye;*"—What think you, said I, of Mr. OPTIC's last essay?—he answered with a significant look of approbation, It is truly excellent, the subject is peculiarly well-timed, and to every American, highly interesting; his comparison, drawn from a

pure source, must be pleasing, and is calculated to excite the attention of many, both to the intrinsic excellences (perhaps unexplored by them) in the sacred writings, and to the beneficial consequences resulting to individuals and to the community, from habits of industry.—And do you not think, said I, that were he to recommend to his fair readers, some other parts of scripture, the novelty of the reference would induce them to lay aside their romances and read their bibles?—Perhaps it might, said he, but pray what particular part could you recommend to those whose minds are engrossed with tales of love, rural scenes, &c. &c.?—I would, replied I, for its beauty, purity of diction and elevation of sentiment, introduce to their notice, the pathetic and highly finished history comprised in in the book of RUTH, and I have no doubt they would find it an agreeable relaxation from that insipid sameness to which they have been accustomed.—He smiled at the singularity of my suggestion, expressed his coincidence, and bade me good night.

TIM TITULAR.

ORIGINAL.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO A FRIEND,

ON A VIRTUOUS LIFE.

—— CAN I omit so favourable an opportunity as the present,* of communicating an idea or two to my friend URANIA? Forgive me URANIA, when I tell you I cannot; I am happy in being allowed the liberty of writing to any of the fair in my own strain, and I flatter myself, to you it will not be disagreeable.

I told you, that in the inclosed hymn I always found something, as Mr. HERVEY, says "mournfully pleasing"—something that inspires me with sensations unspeakably more agreeable than those which prophane songs and airs could ever give; yes URANIA, and while I was attempting to sing it for you, my own feelings prompted the expression. The singing of divine harmony awakens the lethargic soul, calls forth the devout affections, and banishes sublunary delight; and when properly performed, never fails of producing a happy consideration. When we consider our own inconstant

* The evening before, the author had been singing for URANIA and some others, a favourite hymn, beginning with "Still out of the deepest abyss," which he said he thought "mournfully pleasing." At her request he made her a copy, which gave occasion for this letter.

state, and the AUTHOR of our existence and all our comforts in a proper light—that HE is infinitely the greatest, wisest and most affectionate of beings, and consequently ought to be the chief object of our love; can we deny him the reasonable acknowledgment of his favours, or the adoration that his infinite goodness calls for? Or shall we be so unnatural and ungrateful as to forget or neglect our heavenly PARENT, who is always so beneficent and good, whose tenderness and compassion sustain us in every scene of life, *Both when we wake and when we sleep?** Forbid it reason; forbid it Heaven!—May such insensibility and ingratitude never reach our hearts!—for should it but once unfortunately enter and find an easy residence there, farewell to every generous feeling—farewell to internal satisfaction—farewell to real pleasure, peace and felicity. Insensibility produces ingratitude, and ingratitude (the vilest principle of action) never fails to bring with it all the vices that wound and debase human nature; hence spring the disagreement and unhappiness in the world; for vice and virtue, being of different nature and complexion, can never reign together; and when discord prevails, peace flies. Were we to bend our attention but a very little at first, to those things which are of the utmost importance, they would, by custom, gradually steal upon our senses and weave themselves into our dispositions: Divine aid would be given to such generous efforts, and be effective of the happiest consequences, for divine grace would follow, to refine the emotions of our souls, soften the ruder passions, and gently turn the current of our affections to their proper channel; nor would we, in such a state, as some people foolishly imagine, give up all our pleasures; quite the reverse! So far would we be from giving up our pleasures, that then we would be beginning to know what true pleasures are; would then experience some of those of the purest kind, and even while in this vale of sorrow and imperfection, commence that bliss of which the world, buried in licentiousness, is ignorant, and which riches and power can never bestow, that bliss which would still be improving till it opened into the fullest joys of immortality; but surely, URANIA, were not this the case, and were we even to lay aside every hope of a future reward to Virtue, and confine her to the present state of affairs, she would appear in her own native beauty, in her celestial garb, still lovely, still the eligible companion in this life, and attract the attention and courtship of all, and particularly the thoughtful; for she is evidently the

* Milton.

parental source of every good and every blessing. I should be happy, URANIA, to see only two of Virtue's attendants, flourishing among mankind, I mean *Modesty* and *Integrity*. If your sex made *modesty* their principal ornament, they would command infinitely more respect and love than they could possibly do by a contrary deportment; they would enjoy a happiness unknown to the giddy and thoughtless, but peculiar to that gentle frame of mind; and dispense around that softness and sweetness, which alone can make happy, and which experience only can express: And if *integrity* were but the governing principle of our sex, I rejoice in the idea, the fair would have nothing to fear, for they would be always secure—confidence would be inviolably preserved—veracity called in question no more—and love and innocence reign in perpetual tranquility. Virtue is therefore the only foundation of true comfort we can build upon in this fluctuating scene of things—the only jewel we can really possess and assuredly call our own. Riches and dominion may fly, or be wrested, from us—enjoyment may cloy, and if ever so intense, is but transient—all the blessings of time may be taken away in a moment; but Virtue, immortal Virtue, will remain our own, when human life, with all its appurtenances, are snatched from us forever; the mere recollection of having performed virtuous actions, diffuses serene joys thro' the soul; whereas, if we look back upon an ill-spent life, the retrospection fills us with disquietude and regret.—When the mind labours under a load of cares, *Virtue* is her only support; when under the frowns of adverse fortune, or confined in the gloomy horrors of a dungeon, Virtue lays open to her view a region of serenity and happiness which she shall enjoy when those momentary pains are over; and last of all, when a life devoted to Virtue draws to a conclusion, and the time arrives when friends and acquaintances must bid a long, long adieu, and be seen no more, Virtue inspires the soul with the greatest composure and calmness, tells her that she is going to a happier world; that the separation from her near and dear relatives below will be but short, and that in a little while, they too will leave a vale of tears for a glorious habitation among the sons of GOD, where the great PARENT of all, diffuses the blessings of his affection and wipes away all tears from the eyes of his once sorrowing children. Thus aided by Virtue, and thus inspired by a blissful immortality, the soul with rapture embraces the kind power that unlocks her prison, unbinds her fetters and sets her at perfect liberty in the realms

of light and bliss. But they who pursue a different course of life, taste not one real pleasure, one divine sensation; they drive from their thoughts every idea of a separation, tho' fully persuaded by daily observation, that a change must, according to the course of nature, succeed in them, as it does in their fellow mortals; and when the hour comes in which they must part, whether they will or no—must close their eyes from earthly things forever, they shudder at the awful period, shrink at death, and fain would deceive HIM who can penetrate into the inmost recesses of the human heart.—Death to such may with propriety be stiled the king of terrors; for all the horrors of guilt and despair tear the conscience and make them wretched—they once despised him, or never cared to spend a single thought upon him, for fear of bringing a gloominess over their minds, when in reality it would be the only remedy for preventing, or effectually dispelling it, and would cause a genuine cheerfulness, productive of every grateful feeling—but alas! they now find their error—and would give a world, if they had it, for but a few years longer, that they might retrieve a misspent life, make their peace with their CREATOR, and prepare for a state of everlasting blessedness—how do they now detest those gilded allurements which drew their feet from the paths of *Virtue*, the source of peaceful security!—and how abhor those actions which they once thought gentlemanly and becoming. They look back, and scenes of guilt awaken the keenest misery—they look forward, and the bar of justice overwhelms their minds with dread confusion and despair. O, URANIA! how fleeting and how uncertain are all our enjoyments here! We may be in full possession of health, strength, and the comforts of this life in the morning, and before the evening, we may be deprived of them all and laid in the dust, consigned to mortality. Certainly, this evinces the necessity of a virtuous life, which will ensure us a state after this, of happiness, pure, perfect and divine, beyond the most sanguine and glorious hopes which we can possibly conceive. I must now ask pardon for having exceeded the bounds of a letter. Perhaps I may have given occasion for displeasure—if so, I am sorry for it. I am always desirous of pleasing, wherever, I can do it consistent with my duty; and I hope nothing shall induce me to attempt to violate that. Should I however, be so unfortunate as to incur censure or dislike for things of this nature, I shall bear it cheerfully, and trust that the consciousness of having done right, will support me under it. Adieu!

PHILANDER.

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

HYMN FOR SUNDAY EVENING.

As for me, I will call upon GOD: and the LORD shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice. PSALM LV. 16. 17.

I will praise THEE, for thou hast heard me; and art become my salvation. PSALM CXVIII. 21.

O GOD of love, my joy, my hope,
Who hast been with me all day long;
Thee I approach to offer up
The incense of my evening song.

O deign to hear the song of praise
And gratitude, devoid of art,
Which, earnest, thus I strive to raise,
Warm from the altar of my heart.

That heart is thine, sincerely thine;
No rival there has had a place,
Since first it felt the beams divine,
Of thine enlight'ning, cheering grace.

Whither, then, whither should it go,
But to the object of its love?
To whom should its fond feelings flow,
But HIM who made those feelings move?

But where shall first begin the strain,
To sing his goodness and his pow'r?
Alas! my harp, 'tis all in vain;
I can but wonder and adore.

Who but is struck with deep amaze,
To think what countless worlds there are,
Revolving 'mid unbounded space,
And that a world is ev'ry star!

Who but is deeper struck with awe,
When he beholds earth's lowly sphere
The great CREATOR's favour draw,
For man, his image, breathing here!

Yet higher still our wonders rise,
And in astonishment we're lost,
To see th' ETERNAL bow the skies,
And come to dwell with man in dust!

Hark! yet the constellations ring,
Whose echoes fill the worlds on high;
The sons of GOD exulting sing,
And shout the universal joy.

O! let me catch the song of praise,
Thus chanted round th' eternal throne;
For me, and all the human race,
Was this unbounded goodness shewn.

Thus Inspiration's sacred scroll,
To glory lighted up my mind;
There prospects open'd on my soul,
Of bliss eternal and refined.

O GOD of mercy and of love!
How great my gratitude should be,
For such a treasure from above,
That makes earth heav'n, and leads to thee!

For O! how many souls there are,
Who never heard the gospel's sound!
And many, reading it, appear
To miss what I in mercy found!

LORD, if it be thy will divine,
Let it be spread from pole to pole,
Thro' ev'ry region glorious shine,
Enlight'ning ev'ry human soul.

So shall thy public worship raise
It's altars thro' the earth abroad;
Till ev'ry land thy name shall praise,
And ev'ry tongue confess to GOD.

Blest worship! privilege supreme!
That, like an angel, on *this day*,
Pours consolation's cheering stream,
And drives the fiends of sin away.

O, how transporting 'tis to see
Thousands of fellow creatures join,

And raising all their souls to thee,
Pay homage at thy sacred shrine!

May I frequent their meetings there,
With pure devotion at my heart;
Unite in service, praise and pray'r,
And to my GOD my soul impart.

Sweet pray'r and praise! th' appointments best
Or in thy courts, or solitude;
Whence flow rich comforts ever blest,
That make the vilest sinner good.

I've felt their pow'r, I own their sway,
Since first I call'd upon thy name;
They turn'd my darkness into day,
And wak'd within love's purest flame.

Not the world's love, that grov'ling lies,
A fellow mortal all its care;
But that which soars beyond the skies,
To thee most lovely and most fair:—

'Tis JESUS! Source divinely bright,
Of perfect beauty, bliss and joy,
Who gives extatic, sweet delight,
And raptures that can never cloy!

While I pour out my soul to him,
In gratitude, and pray'r, and praise,
His grace and glory round me beam,
And wrap me in the sacred blaze.

O my dear LORD, REDEEMER dear!
May I, on this thy blessed day,
Before thee always thus appear,
And frequent more, to sing and pray.

Nor let my warm devotion be
To one day out of sev'n confined;
May ev'ry morn and ev'ning see
The off'rings of my grateful mind.

May all the human race engage
My aspirations for their good;
And O! may ev'ry nation, age,
Bend to our GOD in gratitude!

And now, O FATHER! GOD of love!
As ev'ning shades around me close,
Permit some spirit from above,
To watch thy suppliant in repose.

Resign'd to THEE, to quiet rest,
May balmy sleep unseal my eyes;
May heavn'ly visions make me blest,
And I reviv'd, to duty rise:

Thus, in the sleep of death, may I
Repose 'till resurrection's day,
When my REDEEMER, from on high,
Shall call my ransom'd soul away. ALCANDER.

ORIGINAL.

INVOCATION TO SPRING.

COLD *Winter*, sad, on heavy wing,
Now leaves us with reluctant flight;
O! come, thou milder season, SPRING,
Thy cheering presence we invite.

Still frost and piercing winds remain,
With shiv'ring morn and chilly eve;
But come with all thy smiling train,
The streams from icy bonds relieve.

Refresh us with thy genial breeze,
And bring thy fertilizing show'rs;
Enrobe with green, the earth, the trees,
And beautify the scene with flow'rs.

Nor leave thy choristers, but bring
Those sweet musicians of the grove,
Which native notes to Nature sing,
Exciting man to grateful love.

O come, mild SPRING, nor yet delay
To spread thy blessings-pregnant sky;
Bring harmony, chace grief away,
And raise our drooping spirits high.

Then o'er the fields with joy we'll range,
And thankful songs our hearts shall raise,
To HIM who bids the seasons change,
The object of all Nature's praise. ALICIAN.